

Remarks

Claims 1-20 are pending. Claim 11 is amended. Claims 20-24 are newly added. Support is found through the specification and in the originally filed claims. No new matter has been added.

In response to the Restriction Requirement dated May 16, 2006, Applicants elect Group III, original claim 11, drawn to a method of identifying an inhibitor of B2M activity comprising comparing the proliferation of chondrocytes, for prosecution on the merits with traverse.

Applicant has amended claim 11 to more clearly define the invention claimed thereby, and respectfully requests that newly added claims 20-24 depending from claim 11 be added to Group III.

The traversal is respectfully submitted on the grounds that it would not be an undue burden on the Examiner to search the claims of the elected group, Group III, with each one or combination of the polynucleotides of Groups I and IV recited in Tables 2 and 3 since the searches overlap with each other, and on the grounds that it would not be an undue burden on the Examiner to search the claims of the elected group, Group III, with each one or combination of the polypeptides of Groups II and V recited in Tables 2 and 3 since the searches overlap with each other.

Amendment of claim 11, so as to limit said increase in said proliferation to one which is a specific increase finds support in the specification, for example, at about the last third of paragraph 131. New claims 20 and 21, limiting the claimed chondrocytes to those being derived from a subject having osteoarthritis or to those being derived from a subject severe osteoarthritis, respectively, find clear and unambiguous specification support, for example at paragraphs 207, 220 and 242. New claim 22, limiting the claimed chondrocytes to those being primary chondrocytes, finds clear and unambiguous specification support, for example at paragraph 242, 1st sentence. New claim 23, limiting the claimed chondrocytes to those being cultured chondrocytes, finds clear and unambiguous specification support, for example at paragraph 242, 1st sentence. New claim 24, limiting the claimed chondrocytes to those being human

chondrocytes, finds clear and unambiguous specification support, for example at paragraph 207, 220, and 242.

A petition for extension of time is attached. However, should any fees be required to ensure consideration of this response, the Commissioner is authorized to charge Deposit Account 04-1105, Reference No. 204231/2032.

Conclusion

Applicant submits that all claims are allowable as written and respectfully request early favorable action by the Examiner. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conversation with Applicant's attorney/agent would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is cordially invited to call the undersigned attorney/agent of record.

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Respectfully submitted,

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